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Senate

The Senate met at 3 p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable JIM WEBB, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Virginia.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Almighty God, You have plans for us and power to make them happen. Give the Members of this body a knowledge of Your will for our Nation and world. Remind them that they serve a public trust, beyond personal gain or glory. May they see that no nation lives for itself alone but is responsible to You for peace, and for the well-being of all of Your children. We pray in Your sacred Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable JIM WEBB led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. BYRD).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, July 28, 2008.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable JIM WEBB, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Virginia, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

Mr. WEBB thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, there will be an hour for debate equally divided and controlled by the two leaders or their designees. Senators should be prepared for two rollcall votes to begin around 4 p.m. The first vote will be a live quorum and the second vote will be on the motion to invoke cloture on the motion to proceed to S. 3297, a bill to advance America's priorities.

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT REQUEST— S. 3268

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate considers S. 3268, the bill be considered in the following manner: there be 3 hours of general debate on the bill, equally divided and controlled between the leaders or their designees; that the only first-degree amendments in order be those listed in this agreement and that second-degree amendments which are relevant to the first degree to which offered be in order; provided further that if the managers and leaders acting jointly determine that a side-by-side amendment strategy is the appropriate manner to address the amendments in order, then in lieu of a second degree a side-by-side amendment would be in order, with the majority side getting the first vote if that were the case; that debate time on any amendment, first or second degree, in this agreement be limited to 2 hours equally divided and controlled in the usual form; that each amendment, first and second-degree, be subject to an affirmative 60-vote threshold; that if it achieves that threshold, then it be agreed to and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, but if it does

not achieve the affirmative 60 votes, then the amendment be withdrawn; the Republican amendments would be offshore drilling, an oil shale amendment, nuclear energy, and then there is a package of—I think there are 42 cosponsors in a package they have relating to energy; the Democratic amendments: We would have four amendments on the subject of energy; that upon disposition of all amendments, the bill be read a third time, and the Senate vote on passage of the bill, as amended, if amended, with no intervening action or debate.

Mr. President, before the distinguished Republican leader decides what to do on this, basically this is on the energy package to set this up where there would be, as indicated here, four amendments on each side. Ours could either be second degrees or, if we wanted a side by side, we could do that. There would be, as has been the standard around here on issues such as this, a 60-vote threshold. This would take care of issues that we understand are important to the minority: offshore drilling, oil shale exploration, nuclear energy, and the omnibus package that they put together.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

The Republican leader is recognized.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, let me say to my good friend, the majority leader, I think we are getting very close to being able to reach an agreement to go forward. This is a significant step in the direction I had hoped we might take.

I ask my good friend, I have a leadership meeting in an hour or so. I wish to consult with my leadership team about the proposal he has offered. But I think—

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I withdraw the consent request and will renew it at a later time.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, let me say, I am very encouraged by this

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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